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THE MASSACHUSETTS TEACHER.

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{ C. S. PENNELL,
Editor of this Number.

VOL. I.

BOSTON, SEPT. 1, 1848.

NO. 17.

To express the changing *feelings* of man, a poet has called him a pendulum. An observer of men's *opinions* may with propriety borrow the comparison. Opinions, like pendulums, have momentum; and, when once in motion, find motion as much a natural state as rest. Adherence to a true principle, to the disregard of others which should modify its application, often carries men's opinions from one extreme of error, quite past the golden mean, to another and equally pernicious extreme.

A few years since, in most schools much more was learned verbatim, than is at present. The *rules* in the arithmetic were recited, whether they were understood or not; geography was sometimes studied without a map; in some books, the first paragraph concerning each country gave the words in which to state the boundary, and these were learned and recited, while the pupil thought very little, if at all, concerning the position of the countries mentioned. He had no outline before his mind. Grammar, for the girls, was the chosen sphere for this memorising. I know one who, in three weeks, learned her text-book from beginning to end, and could give promptly, in course, every definition and paradigm, and every rule of syntax. She could say "third person singular" with due rapidity and grace. But she knew very little of the principles or use of grammar till some years afterwards.

Our Sabbath-Schools were conspicuous for this practice. Whole chapters of the Bible were recited, and the number of the verses was recorded by the teacher, as if the number was every thing, and the thoughts nothing; the whole very much reminding one of those Hindoos who, thinking that their prayers have efficacy according to the number of times they are repeated, write them on slips of paper and hang them in

the wind, believing that each flap of the paper is received by their deity as one repetition of the prayer.

But the necessity of cultivating the reflective faculties was urged, and forthwith, the sentiment, "Learn nothing but what you understand, was put over the school-house door; and children were trained to state causes, and assign effects, though they might remember neither phenomena nor causes. In arithmetic, rules were in many instances discarded, and an analysis of the reasoning was made a *substitute* for the rule, instead of an *accompaniment* to it, or a *preparation* for it. In the Sunday-Schools, question-books took the place of the Bible itself, and committing the verses to memory has very much gone out of date. The pupils go, Bible and question-book in hand, to hear the teacher's explanation, and look out the references without learning even the passage which is the subject of the lesson.

It is not meant that these extremes have existed every where and with all teachers. The thinking *never* were content with learning words alone; neither have they *become* willing, that a paragraph explained and understood, should be forgotten, because the ideas were not clothed in words, and committed to memory. The truth is, we should do the one, and not leave the other undone. Children should understand what they learn,—should not be willing to pass a sentence without understanding it, if it be within their comprehension. In arithmetic, let the Colburn analysis be mainly relied on; but when a process is understood, let the pupil have and *learn* a concise expression for it, under the name of rule. In grammar, let the teacher, so far as his time will permit, talk with the pupils concerning a part of speech; and when they see its characteristics, and can select it among others, let them *learn* a definition of it. So of the principles of syntax; let the principle be seen from questions and examples, and then the pupil can understand a rule embodying it. As far as possible, let the pupil deduce the rule from the examples; and not refer the examples to the rule for explanation, as if the rule were a reason. Let him see that the language was made before the grammar, which will be to many a new idea. And when the pupil is ready for the definitions and rules, let them be perfectly learned.

In many things, as in history, the reading of geography, &c., the pupil should express in his own words the ideas of the book; and, while doing it, he should not be allowed to stammer in disjointed sentences and badly chosen words, with the apology, "I know it, but can't think of it." If he hesitate for a word, refer him to the language of the book, telling him that his vocabulary is yet small, and he must increase it by finding

and learning the word for the idea which he could not express. In this manner he will increase his stock of words, and get the command of them, so that they will come at his bidding. By reciting thus, pupils may use text-books giving much more detail than if they were to learn the words of the paragraphs; and this is what they want in these studies. Youth is the season when simple facts are most easily secured; hence, children want great detail and no compends nor abstracts.

But let no teacher think that a child will be injured by learning the words of whole sentences. He will do well to learn many forms of words. The power of remembering with ideas, the precise language in which they are expressed, is very valuable. Let this capacity have its due exercise among the endowments of our Creator.

During the periods of childhood and youth, with little labor, many expressions of good sentiments, in prose and verse, may be lodged in the mind, which, if not well understood at the time, will be of value afterwards. The words are as seeds in winter, but the spring sunshine of opening intellect will give to them a meaning and a use. This is especially true of moral truths and maxims of life. Who has not often found a monitor in words learned thus? Many a hand has been stayed from crime, many a good impulse quickened, a wavering purpose fixed, and a prudent course of life pursued by the recollection of some Scripture precept, or other expression of moral truth, learned in childhood.

Besides, the stanza of poetry, patriotic or devotional, excites an emotion which is repeated as often as the lines recur; so that the susceptibility to such emotions is increased. Who can determine how much such little things may do to determine the feelings, tastes, and, indeed, the whole character of the individual!

While I speak of committing sentences to memory, sometimes, which may not be understood, let me not be thought to check an inquiring spirit. Desire to know the reasons of all things should be stimulated. It will be a great source of happiness.

Felix, qui potuit rerum cognoscere causas.

It will put the boy in the way to become an independent, thinking man. The boy, who, when studying geography, seeks, in latitude, elevation, proximity to the ocean, &c., reasons for the statements made concerning climate and productions, is preparing to ask reasons, by and by, for statements in politics and morals. He is preparing to yield assent to reasons, rather than great names; and to adopt with caution what he knows little of, whether it be a quack's nostrum or a Pope's manifesto.

The natural sciences, where we most ask the reasons of things, seem to produce a more inquiring and independent state of mind, than language, where the student is employed in learning forms, and in referring constructions to grammatical rules. Some have thought that that they could trace the leading characteristics of Protestant and Catholic communities, to a freer study of nature by the one, and, to a greater confinement to the study of language and criticism on the books of the church and its fathers by the other.

But, be all this as it may, children should be led to think on the meaning of what they learn. They should not neglect to cultivate the power of remembering words; they should store their minds with good sentiments, which may guard them amid the temptations of life.

LESSON IN GEOGRAPHY.

"Talk is omnipotent," is somebody's hyperbole. It makes considerable difference what the kind of talk is, and that which is good may be out of time; still conversation is a great means of directing opinions and of imparting knowledge. It has an appropriate place in the exercises of a school. It leads the pupil to form a habit of attention; he learns to reflect on what he has learned and is learning, and to use the old to explain what is new. In no way is he better taught *to think*. It is important not to mingle this exercise very much with the actual reciting, lest the pupil slide into the notion, that if he does not prepare his lesson, the teacher will explain it, so that it will do very well.

To illustrate what has been said, I will give, as nearly as I can, a simple exercise of a class but little advanced in Geography.

In answer to the question: "What is the commerce of British America?" a boy recites:—"The commerce consists in the exchange of the flour, beef, and pork of Upper Canada, and the furs, lumber, ashes, and fish of the other provinces, for British manufactures, and West Indian produce." The teacher asks, "Of what articles have the people of Upper Canada more than they wish for their own use?" (No answer).

Teacher. You may repeat what you have just recited. (Repeats). Of what articles do you say the people of Upper Canada have more than they want, so that they can exchange them for articles which they do not possess?

Pupils. Flour, beef, and pork.

T. Which part of British America is this, in which they have more of these articles than is wanted for home consumption?

P. Upper Cannada.

T. Can you give any reasons for Upper Cannada's having an abundance of flour, while the other provinces have not? (No answer). Why does wheat grow better in Upper than in Lower Canada?

P. The soil is thin in the other provinces. (It is so stated in the lesson.)

T. What do you mean by the soil's being thin? (No answer). If you hoe in the garden at home, do you observe a differently colored earth, when you have dug down a few inches?

Pupils. We do.

T. That upper soil is what nourishes the plants, and it must be deep enough for this purpose; for the gravel or clay below contains very little which the plants can draw out for their support. This soil is much deeper and better in the garden than in the field, which is the reason that the garden plants grow more luxuriantly. Upper Cannada has, *as you say*, a deeper and richer soil than most other parts of British America. This enables the people to raise wheat, which is ground to flour. Do you think of any reason, besides better soil, for this province producing more wheat than the other provinces? (No answer). Is any part cold?

P. Upper Canada is warmer than the other provinces.

T. Right. What makes you think it warmer?

P. It is nearer the equator, so that the sun is more nearly overhead.

T. Those who can *now* tell why Upper Canada is more productive than the other provinces can raise the hand. (All hands are raised). You may answer.

P. Because it has a more fertile soil, and a warmer climate.

T. Why is this region called *Upper* Canada? (No answer). Which way does the St. Lawrence run?

P. Towards the North East.

T. Do the lakes around Upper Canada flow out through the St. Lawrence, or does that river empty into the lakes?

P. The lakes flow through the St. Lawrence to the ocean.

T. Why, then, is this called *Upper* Canada?

Pupils all. Because it is the highest.

T. Lake Huron is nearly six hundred feet above the level of the sea; and the descent from this lake to the ocean averages about six inches to a mile. Since we are talking about

the height of land, look upon your maps, and tell me what evidence you can find that the country North-West of Lake Superior is elevated ?

P. The rivers all flow *from* that region.

T. And water always runs down hill, you think ? What rivers, and in what directions ?

P. The Mississippi flows towards the South ; Lake Winnipeg runs out through Nelson's River to Hudson's Bay ; and Lake Superior with the others in its course, flows through the St. Lawrence to the ocean.

T. You are able, then, to tell where the high country is, by observing which way the rivers flow. Yesterday, some of you did not know which way the water flows over Niagara Falls,—a difficulty which you will not experience again, I think.

T. The paragraph about commerce, which you recited, named some things of which the *other provinces* have an abundance. What are they ?

P. Furs, lumber, ashes, and fish.

T. Where do they obtain the furs ?

P. Of the Indians.

T. Do the Indians occupy much of the country ?

P. Nearly all of it. Our lesson of to-day says that the white inhabitants are mostly found in the valleys of the St. Lawrence and Ottawa rivers, and on the shores of the vast lakes.

T. A great many men are employed in traversing the vast northern wilderness to purchase furs of the Indians. They pay them in guns, powder, and shot, and in ornaments, of which you know the Indians are very fond, and for which they pay great prices,—fifty times as much as they cost the traders. What is lumber ?

P. Boards, wood, &c.

T. Is wood abundant ?

P. It is.

Another Pupil. If the soil is so thin, I should think there would not be enough to support the roots of trees.

T. That is a good thought ; and, through all the north, on account of the poor soil and cold climate, the trees are very small. The book calls them —

P. Stunted Shrubs.

T. You can see wood from Nova Scotia on the wharves in Boston. How many know what is meant in the lesson by ashes. (No answer). Potash and pearlash. The saleratus which you see at home, is the same, made white by refining. Potash is made from common wood ashes. Where the wood is abundant, they burn it in huge piles, on purpose for the ashes. The ash-

es are soaked in large tubs, which have holes in the bottom, and the liquid which drains from them is called lye. This is boiled till the water evaporates, and passes off in vapor, as you see it pass from the spout of a tea-kettle at home. What is left in the bottom of the kettle, is potash, and when refined, becomes saleratus. The name *potash* was given because it was made in iron pots. After partial purifying it is called *pearlash*, from having a pearly lustre. What is another article, of which they have an abundance?

P. Fish.

T. Where is the greatest fishing ground?

P. Near the Island of Newfoundland.

T. We have no more time to talk about the articles which the people of British America have to spare. What do they exchange these for?

P. For British manufactures and West Indian produce.

T. What are manufactures?

P. Things made.

T. The people of Canada and the other Provinces, manufacture but few articles. The British Government prefers to have them buy articles made in England, and almost all such articles as cloths, knives, hats, jewelry, are imported from that country. England is the greatest manufacturing nation in the world, and obtains much money by selling to other nations. Do you know what nation has the most ships?

P. The English nation.

T. Yes; so that England carries to the people of Canada articles which they want from other countries, as tea from —

P. China.

T. Silks from —

P. France and Italy.

T. And take for pay their flour, furs, lumber, &c. What is the West Indian produce spoken of?

P. Sugar, molasses, fruits, &c.

T. What is exchanging the produce of one country for that of another, in this manner, called?

P. Commerce.

The above conversation is more protracted than is commonly necessary, on a single paragraph, and longer than the teacher's time will often permit; but some such course should be pursued. The teacher who omits to seek and improve opportunities for such questioning, loses many of the very best occasions for promoting the enjoyment and improvement of his pupils. Let the lessons be so short, that they can be recited, and leave some time for such exercises. The first object should be to

see that the lesson is understood ; the next, to communicate collateral information. The first is the most important ; for, if the ideas of a short lesson be perfectly apprehended, and judicious questioning lead the pupil to reason upon them, he is in the way to good scholarship. But he may recite till doomsday, paragraphs which he does not understand, and never become a scholar.

It is very difficult for beginners to get distinct notions, even after they know the meaning of the words. They have not learned to create from the words of a passage, the picture which the author had when writing it. Every one knows the difficulty of comprehending a machine from a description. The reader may understand all the words, but the machine does not stand up before him, in just proportions, and move. It is quite as difficult for a beginner in Geography to get an idea of the position of a town, the course of a river, or the surface and scenery of a state. Perhaps he is learning about New Hampshire, and knows the meaning of the terms picturesque, sublime, &c., but what measure has he of height or distance ? how does he take the angles of the slopes, span the ravines, give color to the forests, hear the waterfalls, and catch the shadows of the flitting clouds ? Next to actual view of the objects, are the illustrations, which can be presented in the discourse of one who has the living picture fresh before him. Let the teacher be prepared with illustrations. Be sure to know the height of the neighbouring hill, the width of the stream which the pupils have seen, and what two points in the school district are just a mile apart. Then slowly, with much repetition, from such simple elements, can be formed a picture of the tract of country, or whatever may be described.

A CONVERSATION

WITH A CLASS AFTER READING IN THE TESTAMENT.

Teacher. What is meant by the sentence, " God hath set one thing over against the other ? " (Pause). Before you answer this, let me ask if any one condition in the world, possesses every thing that is desirable, and is free from every thing that we would avoid ?

A pupil. It does not.

T. Do those conditions which are destitute of some desirable things, seem to be compensated by the possession of other blessings ?

P. They do.

T. Can any one tell me now what is meant by "one thing's being set over against the other?" (Several raise hands.)

T. The first may answer.

P. It means, that if God has made one condition inferior in some respects, he has made it better in others.

T. If you reflect on this subject, you will comprehend one of the great principles of God's plan in the arrangement of this world. Do you think of anything in which this system of compensation is manifest? (Pause). Perhaps your knowledge of Geography will supply some instances.

P. The colder parts of the earth are more healthful than the torrid zone; but they are destitute of fruits, and beautiful plants and flowers.

Another pupil. The heat and dampness, in the low portions of the torrid zone, which are so injurious to health, are just what is needful for the rapid growth of vegetation.

Another. I would not live where they have the yellow fever, and such diseases, for all their fine fruits.

T. It is very wise to think of the advantages which our own location possesses. We should think of the blessings which we have, rather than of those which we see others possess.

P. I do not know what they have in Lapland or Greenland, to make up for their cold climate and want of all the comforts which we enjoy.

T. What do you say to this, scholars?

P. They have animals about them, from which they can obtain warm furs, for clothing.

T. Then you think that the Creator has made some provision for the cold climate.

P. They catch seals to eat, and you told us that the fat flesh of these animals is more healthful in that cold climate than it would be here.

P. Travellers say that the Laplanders, with the reindeer, which supplies them with clothing, food, conveyance, and many other things, are happy, and love their country as much as we love ours. If they are contented, that's enough.

T. Perhaps we shall be unable to make it appear that the people of Greenland or Lapland are as well supplied with the comforts of life as we are; but it is important to consider the benevolence displayed, in giving us a capacity for becoming adapted to whatever condition we may be placed in. Not only may the Greenlander become accustomed to his snow hut, and like it very well, but his physical system becomes adapted to the climate, and, as one of you said, to the food which abounds. This is a beautiful feature of the Creator's plan. But some

parts of *warm* countries are very much wanting in what we call comforts.

P. The deserts ?

T. There are certainly many discomforts there.

P. It is difficult crossing the sands.

P. They have camels just fitted to journey over the deserts with ease.

P. Their feet are made to walk on the sand, and since there is no water there, they can take at one time a supply for several days.

P. Camels can tell, at a great distance, where there is water.

P. So can horses on our prairies do that.

T. Then you think, that, to make a desert country more comfortable, God has made the camel its natural inhabitant, and endowed him with powers of enduring heat, thirst, and fatigue, which no other animal possesses. What do you know of the soil of countries rich in minerals ?

P. The richest mines and best quarries are in mountains, unfit for cultivation.

P. Gold is found in rocks, or in the sands, in the beds of rivers.

T. Thus, somewhere, if not *on* the surface, beneath it, God has lodged a treasure for man. Can you find any illustrations of this, in the varied capacities and dispositions of men ?

P. I know those who can learn a lesson quickest, sometimes forget it first.

P. Those scholars who learn Arithmetic most easily, do not like Grammar so well.

P. Some men are made to be Philosophers, some to be Statesmen, and some can be Poets.

T. And you suppose each man more successful and more happy, in the place for which he is best fitted ?

P. In the Revolution, nobody was eloquent like Patrick Henry, and Washington alone had the good judgment and discretion which secured the confidence of every one.

T. We should remember that the *natural* differences are much less than is commonly supposed, and are much increased by education. That to which a boy devotes himself, will generally become easy ; his capacity for it will increase ; while what is neglected, will become more difficult. Those faculties which we use properly, are strengthened by the exercise, and those which we neglect to exercise, grow weak. Can any one repeat the Scripture expression for this idea ?

P. "To him who hath, shall be given ; but from him that hath not, shall be taken away even that which he hath."

T. Just so of the disposition. Those who are thought most amiable, have perhaps become so by striving to cherish kind feelings, and by checking every selfish and hasty impulse. We are, after all, in mind, disposition, and health, very much our own workmanship.

When we think of difference in natural endowment, we should remember that the Creator requires of no man the exercise and improvement of powers which have not been given him. The servant of one talent was reproved for the neglect of his one only. Does any one of the class in the Latin Reader remember anything there concerning this distribution of Nature's gifts?

P. The fable of Juno and the peacock?

T. Yes. Can you state the substance of it?

P. The peacock complained to her mistress, Juno, because sweetness of voice had been denied to herself, while the Nightingale, a bird of so little beauty, excels in singing. Juno said to her, "And rightly; for it is not proper for all excellence to be conferred upon one."

T. This self-educated slave, six hundred years before the christian era, very clearly expressed the great truth we are considering, though he had but the arrangement of nature to draw it from. We find that the same kind provision which is made for the happiness of our own race, is extended to the lower animals. What endowment have they to supply the want of human reason?

P. Instinct.

T. We have spoken of this, some time, I recollect. What is the definition which you give of instinct?

P. The power of doing things in a certain way, without instruction, or the exercise of judgment.

T. The bee is our most common illustration of this. He does his work perfectly the first time, has no need of experience, and makes no improvements. His cells were always made as he makes them now. Mathematicians show that the form he employs is the best possible, for an economical use of the space within the hive. This provision is abundant for him, but in what would it be insufficient for us?

P. The bee can have none of the pleasure of finding out new things.

T. Neither does it have to perform the labor necessary for finding them out.

P. But the pleasure of succeeding, more than pays for all the labor.

T. I am glad that you have no doubts on that point. I will try to give you frequent opportunities to experience the pleasure

of overcoming difficulties. But is there no pleasure in exertion, independent of the successful result?

P. Labor ipse voluptas.

T. The English?

P. Labor itself is pleasure.

T. There can be no reasonable doubt, that the mere exercise of our faculties, upon their proper objects, gives us enjoyment. Are the animals that have not these sources of enjoyment, made unhappy by the want of them?

P. They cannot feel the want, for they do not know that there is anything of which they are ignorant.

T. Each being has means of happiness suited to his own sphere. *Do you suppose a bee can hope?* You may consider it at your leisure. We have time for but one thought more.

It is, that God has indirectly provided for many of our wants by giving us intelligence. We can foresee the wants which the changing seasons will create, and provide for them. If we change our place of residence, we can anticipate the wants of another climate. Without intelligence, man is less provided for than the inferior animals; but, with it, he is lord of them all. If he is born more ignorant than the beaver seems to be, he soon learns to call the agencies of nature to his assistance, and constructs him a substantial habitation. The white bear is better protected than he, but he soon makes the animal's covering his own protection. The whale and the elephant have a thousand times his strength, yet his intelligence subjects them to his use. The horse submits to his rider; the ox to his yoke. The products of one climate do not content him, and he gathers the fruits of another zone. He trains the flowers to mingle their colors afresh, and combines their leaves in new and varied forms. It is not enough that plants should bring forth fruits, "each after his kind;" culture must induce new species, concentrate their sweetness, and make them yield flavors unknown before. And these are all man's devices for the gratification of his physical wants; we have said nothing of the varied forms of intellectual delight which he is capacitated to provide for himself.

Within the remembrance of most of those who are now teachers, a school, with a few exceptions in the larger towns, consisted of no more pupils than were placed under the care of one teacher; and these were of all ages and of every grade of scholarship. In most of their recitations not more than three

or four could be classed together; and many recited singly. In arithmetic, in particular, each went on his solitary way, delving, or skimming, as his nature might be; often hobbling with the support of an elder brother or an old manuscript;—a course which left scholars very much to themselves, and while it made persevering inquirers of those who would know for themselves, left those who were content to be superficial, filmy enough.

But at length it became a doctrine of school philosophy, that a large class can listen and be instructed as well as a small one, (a sentiment which can be adopted only with many modifications), and soon followed large schools; so that more pupils of equal attainments might be found to constitute large classes. In this way several hundred pupils, with from two to half a dozen teachers, were gathered in a single room. Many persons have thought that the evils of having so many together overbalance the advantages. The remedy, is to classify them as they have been, and then assign them to separate rooms. In this way the advantages of good classification are secured, and the evils of great numbers avoided.

The labor of keeping a school still, increases very rapidly with the increase of numbers. With fifty pupils, a teacher may sit and teach. The labor of stimulating to good practices, of watching, talking, and correcting, will require but a very small portion of his efforts. Not being liable to interruption, he can teach well; he can be acquainted with the intellectual condition of each pupil; the attention of a class can be kept so that they will understand the work they are doing, and love it; and hence, respect the teacher who guides them in it. The temptation to play is diminished by this interest in study, and respect for the teacher's wishes, as well as by the diminished chances of escaping detection. But, more than all, he is in direct contact with them. There is a mingling of mind and feelings; and the teacher's may leaven the mass. Diligence, careful motions, quiet, and kind feeling seem befitting the place. But, if this number be doubled, the irregularities of the room will be quadrupled; and as you increase the number, the discipline will descend by as rapid an increase, as gravity impresses on falling bodies. The principal teacher of a school of one hundred and seventy-five scholars, more favorably situated than the average of large schools, said to the writer, that two-thirds of all his labor was spent for the discipline of his school. Now, this labor was much of it lost; for it was not applied to that formation of habits and discipline of will which is a part of education; but merely to keeping order, as it is termed, which is not an *end*, but a *means*.

The master of three or four hundred scholars is not able to become acquainted with them all. He may know their names and faces; but that is not becoming acquainted with them. Even with those under his immediate instruction, he does not have time for that intercourse in which he will most favorably manifest the kind feeling, and desire to confer good, with which his heart is warmed, and his hand strengthened. And how, unless by some neglect of the general oversight, can he really study the pupil's mind, as he recites a paragraph, or analyzes a problem, and question him till he sees just his mode of thinking, — step along with him in thought, supporting him a little if he falters, raising him if he falls, till he learns to go through the work, if "non passibus equis," yet with a good understanding of what he says. The teacher must watch the pupil's thought, till he can feel his mental pulse; then, if receiving instruction, the pupil's mind will follow the words and thought — I had almost said, as the mesmerised person follows the mesmeriser's will, but the pupil's is no passive state. For the best instruction, it is necessary that the teacher should, for the time, devote his whole attention to a single pupil; but how can he do this while superintending a large school.

It is always difficult for a teacher to govern those whom he does not instruct; they are likely to think his discipline, arbitrary restraint; and there is great danger of injustice, when one is obliged to inflict punishment for offences which do not occur under his own eye. For want of time, the teacher is tempted to produce quiet in his domain by a direct appeal to fear, when some other influence ought to be tried. By the same want of time, he is tempted to punish without careful investigation, and without sufficient conversation. The pupil receives the punishment with the impression that 'the master, cares little for it, or, perhaps, likes the work well enough, and every kind feeling is alienated.

The teacher cannot become acquainted with the parents of his pupils, nor secure their coöperation in the affairs of school. It is difficult to do this, in any case; but if the school consist of children from two or three hundred families, it becomes impossible. Hence, few teachers of the larger schools, especially in the cities, ever attempt it; and there is, often, between parents and school, a gulf, passed only by complaints made by the pupils, which are listened to, at home, without rebuke, perhaps with words of sympathy; for how can parents treat a case wisely with such means only of knowing its merits?

Parents, if acquainted with the teacher, will be far more inclined to visit the school house, comprehend its doings, and aid in its duties by counsels, cautions, and words of respect, at home.

This is the duty of parents. The education of their children is their work, by the Creator's arrangement; and, if, finding it inconvenient to do the whole of the work themselves, they associate and form a school, and delegate to committees and teachers power to control the children there, it does by no means free them from the duty of watching and aiding their progress. Teachers should seek this acquaintance with parents, invite their coöperation and stimulate them to the discharge of these duties. They should be acquainted with the children at home — with their employments and habits, the control they are under, and the views of the parents on subjects connected with the school. With such knowledge, the teacher will labor more intelligently and efficiently for the good of his pupils.

It has already been said that the irregularities of the school-room increase very rapidly as the number increases; numbers create temptations. It is true among men every where, that, when they are gathered in dense communities, crimes increase. School districts of children form no exception to this law. Contact breeds contagion. Many a school master, in populous towns, has seen this till he has wished a mountain between every two families in his district, that they might snuff pure air and pure morals together.

Let it not be urged in defence of large schools, that the sympathy of numbers may be turned to good account. The tendency of this sympathy is to evil rather than good. It may be overruled, as man's intelligence turns a waste force of nature to his profit; and, when thus subjected in the mass, is powerful over an individual, like public opinion; but, never, among men or children, has aggregation exerted a purifying influence.

We are told, that law is powerful in proportion to the certainty that its penalties will be inflicted; but, here, the little offender against good order may follow his sportive or disobedient inclination, with many chances of impunity in his favor. The teacher cannot distinguish the necessary from the unnecessary noise; and the necessary noise is like the curtain of night, to many an unlawful deed. This emboldens the pupil; desire is quickened by indulgence; and the consequence is, that too many pupils watch the turning of the master's eye, to catch a whisper or snap a piece of paper, if to do nothing worse. Who can compute the moral effect of months passed in this mischief-seeking state of mind, relieved a little, though the picture be, by the thought, that much of the play arises from inconsiderateness and undirected love of action, rather than from real choice of evil. "Deliver us from temptation," should be the first of all

prayers. But the thought is not much heeded when several hundred boys or girls are crowded into one school-room.

And this makes the teacher's labor severe. I doubt there being any *busy hour*, in any counting-house or bank, which taxes the mind in any degree to be compared with the tax which this constant care, while teaching, imposes.

If I mistake not, a change demanded is to make the schools smaller, and at the same time preserve or even improve the present classification.

We find vices and virtues in both extremes; but the vices of the upper classes have in some degree a dazzling aspect, whereas the vices of the lower classes appear in all their deformity, and offend more deeply the moral sense of the beholder. The difference is in the appearance, not in the reality. A vice which is common to both, is, it must be acknowledged, a far greater vice in a rich, well-bred, and well-informed man, than in one who is ignorant, and in want of food. With the former, it is an act of choice, with the last of necessity. Let us then condemn vice wherever we find it, especially in a depraved aristocracy, and let us not pronounce judgment upon men, as distinguished into two classes, but upon the individual man. The great, if they were the people, would indulge in plebeian vices; and the people would adopt the vices of the great, were they sharing in their distinctions. The balance is even between them; we must not poise the scales. . . . I belong to the party who do not despise their inferiors in the social scale, whilst they respect those above them; whose wish, be it a dream or not, is to raise all men, without regard to the place they hold in the arbitrary hierarchies of politics, to the same degree of knowledge, of liberty, and of moral perfection.

LAMARTINE.

D'Alembert congratulated a young man very coldly, who brought him the solution of a problem. "I have done this to have a seat in the academy," said the young man. "Sir," answered D'Alembert, "with such motives, you will never earn one. Science must be loved for its own sake, and not for the advantages to be derived. No other principle will enable a man to make true progress."

DICKINSON PRINTING HOUSE.

DAMRELL & MOORE, Publishers, No. 26 Washington Street,

To whom all letters should be addressed. TERMS—One Dollar per annum in advance, or One Dollar and Fifty Cents at the end of the year. Twenty-five per cent. allowed to agents who procure five subscribers, and all payments by them to be made in advance.